State of Idaho

DEPARTMENT OF INSURANCE

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NEWS RELEASE

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Department Issues Bulletin on Medicare Marketing Practices

BOISE ID (January 27, 2010) – The Idaho Department of Insurance issued Bulletin 10-01 this week identifying acceptable and unacceptable marketing practices regarding Medicare products. Specifically, the bulletin is directed to companies and producers selling Prescription Drug Plans (PDPs) and Medicare Advantage plans (MAs).

"While the vast majority of Idaho licensed insurance producers are honest and provide a valuable service to their customers, the Department has received some troublesome reports of inappropriate and aggressive insurance producer activity," says Department Director Bill Deal.

The Department has entered into an agreement with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to ensure that PDPs and MAs are correctly marketed and sold by licensed insurance producers.

Some unacceptable marketing practices include soliciting potential enrollees door-to-door, sending unsolicited emails, approaching or soliciting beneficiaries in common areas such as parking lots, and offering gifts to potential enrollees of more than \$15.00.

The bulletin can be viewed in its entirety on the Department's Web site, www.doi.idaho.gov.

Questions regarding producer activities can be directed to the Department's Consumer Affairs office at 334-4250 in Boise or 800-721-3272 toll-free statewide. In addition, the Department's Senior Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA) office is an information resource for seniors that provides assistance in making informed decisions about Medicare and other healthcare options. SHIBA can be reached at 334-4250 in Boise or 800-247-4422 toll-free statewide.